

Care and Safety



*An informal newsletter published by the Office of Regulatory Services,
Health Care Section to share some general information concerning practices that
have resulted in rule violations being cited in hospital settings.*

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Correct -Site Surgery Successful Practices

Wrong site surgery continues to be a major concern for health care organizations and health care providers. Even one event can have a devastating result for the patient, the providers, and family members. Protocols for prevention of such events were developed in 2003 under the auspices of the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations (JCAHO) to assist hospitals in preventing such events. JCAHO member hospitals were required to utilize the protocols in their organizations as of July 2004. Non-member hospitals may also find these protocols helpful, and they can be accessed at www.jcaho.org.

Over the past couple of years, many educational safety forums have addressed themselves to wrong-site surgery, yet reports from hospitals indicate that these events continue to occur. Hospitals have tried different approaches to prevention, but not all of them are working.

A Georgia Patient Safety Project

In 2004, the Office of Regulatory Services was invited to participate in the National Patient Safety Improvement Corps (NPSIC,) a partnership program between the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) and the Veteran's Administration (VA.) The primary goal of the national PSIC program is improving patient safety by providing the necessary knowledge and skills to develop and implement sustainable system interventions based on findings, and to measure and evaluate the impact of the interventions on patient safety. The NPSIC seeks to accomplish these goals by providing knowledge and skills to teams of state field staff and their hospital partners.

The Office of Regulatory Services selected two representatives from Georgia hospitals to participate in the program with ORS representatives, as the Georgia Patient Safety Improvement Corps. The GA PSIC members selected were:

- a) Office of Regulatory Services: Leslee Pool and Paula Mundy
- b) Colquitt Regional Medical Center: Cathy Rowell
- c) Partnership for Health and Accountability: Anne Davis

Each state PSIC team proposed a safety project as a part of participation in the program. The Georgia PSIC team selected a project *to assist hospitals in the prevention of wrong-site surgeries*, as hospital

reports of these events continued, and the events themselves were considered to be preventable. The Corps began planning the Georgia Correct Site Surgery Project during the fall of 2004.

Ideas from Georgia Hospitals

The Georgia PSIC developed the theme of the four C's for the safety project, to stand for Correct Patient, Correct Procedure, Correct Site, and Compliance (with hospital-established policies and procedures). A logo was designed to promote the goals of the project to participants and their hospital colleagues. Georgia hospitals were invited to participate in discussions about barriers they have faced in implementation of procedures to ensure correct-site and correct patient surgeries, and the strategies they have found effective to overcome those barriers. The goal of the project was to develop materials and information to share with other hospitals. Representatives from 30 Georgia hospitals participated in the discussions, which were held from February–April 2005.

From the discussions, there was assembled a list of policy and procedure elements considered to be most essential for success in ensuring correct-site surgery, as well as suggestions and tips for implementation of the procedures. Five *Successful Practices* documents were drafted, which addressed: 1) Patient Identification; 2) Site Marking; 3) “Time-Out” Prior to Surgery; 4) Monitoring for Compliance; and 5) Culture Change.

Correct Site Surgery Toolkit

In addition to the *Successful Practices* information, hospital participants expressed a need for other support tools for improving patient safety at their facilities. In response to those needs, the Corps assembled a Correct-Site Surgery Toolkit. The Toolkit contains:

- **Correct Site Surgery/Procedures – Successful Practices in Georgia for:**
 - **Patient Identification**
 - **Site Marking**
 - **Use of “Time-Out” Prior to Surgery (or any invasive procedure)**
 - **Monitoring for Compliance**
 - **Culture Change**
- **Training PowerPoint Template for Universal Protocols and Your Hospital’s Policies**
- **Sample Surgery Verification Form**
- **Sample Patient Education Brochure**
- **Bulletin Board Templates**
- **Correct-Site Surgery Self-Assessment for Hospitals**
- *Sample Press Releases for Patient Education**
- *Speaker’s Bureau**

*Items in italics are planned

Hospitals and other surgical facilities are encouraged to utilize these materials to strengthen the safety programs in their organizations. The Toolkit materials can be accessed through the above linkages.

The Georgia PSIC will utilize hospital self-assessment information gathered at the time of dissemination of materials as compared to self-assessment information gathered from the same facilities after a period of six-months in order to determine whether the information has been helpful.